

Commuter CHRONICLE

Fall 1989

CARAVAN Survey Reveals the Real Cost of Commuting

Results from a survey of commuting costs reveal that those who drive to work alone each day can end up paying almost 500 percent more for their commute than those who share ride transportation options such as vanpools and carpools.

According to a commute cost comparison released by CARAVAN for Commuters, Inc. this month, the cost of a 100 mile round trip daily commute by car has climbed to over \$5,000 in 1989 while the cost for traveling in a 15-passenger commuter vanpool remained at approximately \$950 for the second straight year.

CARAVAN Commuter Mobility Manager Donna Smallwood said the high cost of driving alone has prompted many to try shared-ride transportation alternatives. "Vanpools and carpools are simply less expensive," she said.

Smallwood said the commute to Boston is even more expensive because of the high price of parking in the city. On average, the cost of parking in downtown Boston is about \$10 per day. "That's about \$200 per month or about the cost of a second car payment," she added. "It all adds up to quite a large expense for someone driving alone."

Boston-bound commuters have a great number of options available to them, all of which are less expensive than driving alone. "Boston is transportation-rich," Smallwood said. "In addition to carpools and vanpools, the MBTA rapid transit, bus, Commuter Rail, and boat services, combined with commuter bus service from every area in Greater Boston make an impressive menu to choose from."

These options also offer considerable savings over the traditional drive-alone commute. For someone commuting from Braintree to Boston, the cost of an MBTA Combo-Plus Pass - a pass good on most T services - and daily parking adds up to just about

\$1,300 per year or just over \$5 per day. Commuter bus service can be quite affordable as well.

Survey p.4

Commute Cost Comparison Vanpools Save You Almost 500%

	Drive Alone	Carpool	Vanpool
Cost per year			
30 RTM	\$ 2,948	\$ 1,474	\$ 663
100 RTM	\$ 5,329	\$ 2,664	\$ 904
Cost per month			
30 RTM	\$ 246	\$ 123	\$ 55
100 RTM	\$ 444	\$ 222	\$ 75
Cost per day			
30 RTM	\$ 11.70	\$ 5.90	\$ 2.60
100 RTM	\$ 21.20	\$ 10.60	\$ 3.60
Cost per mile			
30 RTM	\$ 0.39	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.09
100 RTM	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.04

Carpool is 2 people.
Vanpool is 14 paying passengers plus a driver.
RTM is round trip miles commuted each day.

Based on AAA's 1989 "Your Driving Costs" costs include gas, oil, maintenance, insurance, license, taxes, depreciation and finance charges.

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New Program Aimed at Establishing Regional Employee Transportation Services

A new Regional Transportation Coordinator Program offered by CARAVAN for Commuters, Inc. is helping three very different organizations find solutions to the problem of too many cars and not enough open roadway.

Massport at Logan Airport, the North Suburban Chamber of Commerce in Woburn, and Waltham's Route 128 West Transportation Council are among the first clients to sign on with CARAVAN's Regional Transportation Coordinator's Program.

Under the Regional Transportation Coordinator's Program, CARAVAN places its Marketing Specialists to

work on-site and help clients analyze regional commuter needs, coordinate effective transportation options and incentives programs with participating employers, and implement commuter-oriented marketing efforts.

CARAVAN Executive Director Carolyn DiMambro said, "The program allows the business community to create a regional base for coordinating the transportation efforts of many companies through a single source," DiMambro said.

In the past 16 months, the North Suburban Chamber of Commerce has been conducting a study of traffic patterns and volume in an area

stretching from Concord in the West to Wakefield in the East. According to this study, over 190,000 cars travel through the Route 93 - 128 intersection daily, making it the second busiest interchange in the state.

Bob Mercier, Executive Director of the 900-member Chamber of Commerce, said even though the report is not complete, the need for a regional plan to manage commuter transportation is clear.

"We know that the study will recommend the formation of a regional Transportation Management Organization (TMO)," Mercier said. "Our work with CARAVAN gives us a head start. It's a seed program to form a TMO."

In Waltham, the Route 128 West Transportation Council's slogan reads "Bad Traffic is Bad for Business." Council Executive Director Mary MacInnes says the Regional Transportation Coordinator Program gives the council the ability to spearhead solutions to Route 128 traffic by creating a central resource for coordinating the efforts of corporate transportation programs in the area.



CARAVAN's Regional Transportation Coordinator Program helps businesses meet rush hour traffic and commuter demands head on.

Regional Program p.4

CARAVAN
for Commuters Inc.

Bay State Businesses Try to Head Off the High Cost of Congestion

Boston traffic ranks among the worst in the United States. In fact, the Federal Highway Administration lists the city's congestion as the eighth worst and estimates that drivers experience millions of hours of delay each year. For Bay State businesses, these delays are costing them more than just a lot of lost time. It's costing them millions of dollars in lost productivity.

Nationally, highway congestion is a serious drain on the economy. **The Nation** reports that by the year 2005, traffic delays will cost the U.S. about \$50 billion per year in lost wages and wasted gasoline. Andrew Hamilton, a Staff Scientist with the Conservation Law Foundation estimates Boston's bill will exceed \$2 billion in that year alone.

Leading Bay State companies want to control those costs and have introduced on-site solutions to employee transportation which can manage the problem now, when the cost is not as high, and break the grip of gridlock.

According to Arthur Nelson, President of the Nelson Companies and founding member of the Route 128 West Transportation Council, business is not helpless against the surge of rush hour traffic. "There's no single solution to traffic," he said. "Businesses have to work together to keep from having a big pulse of people on the road at the same time."

In just two years, the Council has created a mix of services which helps employees find alternatives to driving alone. A shuttle van service links area companies to the MBTA Alewife station, RideSource, CARAVAN's free transportation matching service, helps employees form carpools and vanpools, and a new computer traffic information network provides commuters with live up-to-the-minute reports on Route 128 traffic conditions.

"We need better management," Nelson said. "We're smart enough to put people on the moon, we ought to be smart enough to get people to work and home again."



Property Manager Greg Brown and Transportation Coordinator Laurie Goldman know that an on-site commuter services program gives 500 Boylston Street an edge on the competition.

Recent reports estimate that heavy traffic congestion could ring up a \$2 billion annual bill by the year 2005.



For a growing number of companies, Flexible or Variable Work Hours programs are another cost-saving solution to congestion. These programs which either stagger start and end times between employees or allow them to choose their work hours, reduce the rush hour crunch by spreading our demand over a larger window of time.

Frank Strauss, Chief Financial Officer at GTE Waltham said traffic makes adhering to a standard 8:00 to 5:00 schedule nearly impossible for employees. "I tell many people that they probably have flextime already, they just don't recognize it as policy," he said.

Nelson also recognizes Flextime's contribution to better traffic. "If every company in the area offered Flextime, it would be like adding a lane to Route 128," he said.

As on Route 128, employers and especially developers of commercial properties in downtown Boston have discovered that an effective employee transportation program enhances the operation of their businesses. To date, 20 of the City's largest corporations

have made the decision to fight traffic with on-site commuter mobility programs under **Boston on the Move**, a cooperative effort of the Boston Transportation Department and CARAVAN for Commuters.

For Greg Brown, Property Manager of 500 Boylston Street, the cost of congestion is something which has to be continued to keep his business flourishing. "Congestion is a concern to anyone who works in Boston. Whether you drive or take public transportation it affects you."

At 500 Boylston, the developer has made a concerted effort to offer its tenants a full range of commuter services. It sells T-Passes on site, offers free ride-sharing, and has reserved parking spaces for 20 carpools. "It's really in our self-interest to do as much as we can for our tenants," Brown said. "The more we can offer them, the better off we'll be."

Commuter mobility programs contribute to reduced congestion by creating new options and incentives which entice employees out of their cars and onto public transportation and private buses, as well as carpools and vanpools. Fewer cars means fewer delays and improved productivity.

Brown said bad traffic can mean bad business for developers in Boston. "If the cost of getting to Boston goes up, the cost of doing business in the city goes up. When that happens people move their operations to the suburbs."

Route 128 Traffic Information Service Goes On Line

Commuters leaving the offices of some Waltham-area companies will no longer have to wait until they are on the road to know where the backups and bottlenecks are on Route 128 each night, thanks to a new high-tech Traffic Information Network (TIN) offered by the Route 128 West Transportation Council.

The PC-based system provides users with updated traffic information every 10 minutes over a network of live video monitors located in the lobbies of council member

companies. Developed for the project by council member GTE Waltham, TIN should contribute to reducing the rush hour crunch in the Waltham area.

Prospect Hill Developer Arthur Nelson said, "This way people will know what problems are occurring on the road before they get in their cars and add to it. Maybe if people have this information, they will go back to their offices to wait out the problem or at least try an alternate route."

Service will be available from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. - peak evening commuting hours. During the day, the network will be used as an information resource on commute options in the Waltham area.



A new computer information service, developed by Arthur Nelson and Transportation Coordinator Vicki Pascoe, will give commuters live up-to-date on Route 128 traffic before they leave the office.

The **Commuter Chronicle** has been prepared by CARAVAN for Commuters, Inc., as a service to commuters throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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Caravans are published to collect the views of commuters who are responsible for the traffic and the congestion in the city. The information is not to be used for any other purpose. The editorial board of the Caravans is composed of the following members: The Caravans are published monthly and are not for sale. They are a standard specification in the transportation industry.

Highway and Bridge Maintenance Gives The Commonwealth the Largest Commuting Tab

Even with the expense of driving to work alone escalating at a tremendous annual rate, the real cost of commuting doesn't just stop at the gas pump or in some downtown parking garage. In fact, the greatest commuting cost lies under the wheels of every car traveling through Massachusetts and in the growing demand for transportation services statewide.

Rapidly rising traffic volumes and service demands are taking a toll on the Commonwealth's aging infrastructure; our highways need reconstruction and our public transportation needs to be expanded to meet the daily needs of commuters.

According to Massachusetts Department of Public Works Commissioner Jane Garvey, the Commonwealth is faced with the problem of balancing demand and maintaining an efficient modern highway system needed to keep traffic moving.

"Many of the Commonwealth's highways were built in the 1950's and designed for the estimated traffic volumes of the 1960's and 70's," she said. "At that time, no one could have forecasted the growth we've seen in recent years."

"For example," Garvey said, "when the Central Artery was built in 1957, it was designed to carry 75,000 cars per day. While that represents a tremendous amount of traffic for that time, the Artery now carries over 190,000 cars per day."

Between 1980 and 1988 alone, the DPW has spent just under \$1.5 billion on roadways and bridges. And it was during the 80's that the Department has completed such major projects as the Route 1-495 Southeastern extension and the reconstruction of the Southeast Expressway to Boston.

To many people, the solution to congestion is simple - widen the roads. Garvey said wider roads are not necessarily the answer. "We face two major problems. First, the days of adding lanes are, in many cases, over," she said. "We can no longer physically expand many roads."

"Second," Garvey said, "instead of bigger highways, we need a better balance between services. With a greater number of vehicles traveling on our highways, it increases the physical demands of the infrastructure. High demand shortens the lifespan of pavement and bridges."

"If we can spread demand out across the highways in buses, vanpools, and carpools, and over



Moving people instead of vehicles. Buses, carpools, and vanpools and other high-occupancy vehicles can free up miles of traffic.

our public transportation system we can make commuting more affordable in Massachusetts," Garvey said. "We need to concentrate on using our highway systems to move people, and not vehicles."

Maintaining roads and bridges is also an expensive proposition for the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. Reports from the MTA project a toll increase for the 'pike within the first quarter of 1990 as part of its Capital Re-investment Program.

Among the recommendations of a recent report titled *The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority: Critical Needs for the 1990's*, is a call for the state to repair over 183 bridges along the 52-year-old roadway. Of the 260 bridges the Authority owns and maintains between Boston and the Berkshires, two-thirds of them will reach 40 years of age by the end of the 1990's.

The cost of maintaining the

turnpike are growing considerably. The study reveals that in 1980, it states, the average cost of repairing a bridge cost approximately \$525,000. In 1989, the average cost has skyrocketed by 214% to \$1,625,000. During the same time, the cost of resurfacing a mile of road has increased from \$180,000 to \$550,000 - an increase of more



Highway construction is an expensive solution to congestion. In the past five years, the cost of resurfacing one mile of highway has increased by more than 200%.

than 200%.

"We have a good road but an aging one," MTA Chairman Allan McKinnon said about findings from the report. "This study clearly reveals what our needs are and how they should be met."

Members of the private sector are well aware of the cost of maintaining the state's transportation system. Many find it an absolute necessity. According to Bill Coughlin, Executive Director of the Artery Business Committee, there is a strong correlation between good roads and good business.

"You can't have a strong economy without a sound infrastructure," he said. "Without continued improvements to highways and transportation service, the economy cannot continue to grow in the next century."

Incentives Make Ridesharing Attractive in Massachusetts

Special incentive programs offered in Massachusetts save commuters more time and money over driving to work alone and make shared-ride options such as carpools and vanpools two of the best ways to get to work.

Massachusetts Turnpike Authority Carpool Pass Program

Commuter groups of three or more using the Turnpike and/or the Callahan-Sumner Tunnels are eligible to apply for a Carpool Pass at one-third the cost of daily tolls, with an annual savings of more than \$500 per person. Factoring in the parking and gas-line costs, the savings jump to more than 60%, or \$2000 per person per year. To apply, call the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority at (617) 973-7300.

I-93 Carpool Lane

The I-93 Carpool Lane runs from Exit 28 - Sullivan Square/Charlestown to North Station and is open exclusively to carpools and vanpools from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. To use the lane, carpools must have a minimum of two (2) riders. Compliance is strictly enforced by the Massachusetts State Police daily.

Vanpool Boarding Zones

The City of Boston's Vanpool Boarding Zone Program designates 18 reserved 10-minute standing zones for vanpools to pick up and drop off passengers. Conveniently located along most major commuter routes in Boston, these spaces are reserved for vanpools verified by CARAVAN and registered with the Boston Transportation Department. To register, call CARAVAN at 227-POOL.



The I-93 Carpool Lane is one of many incentives to share the ride in Massachusetts.

Regional Program from p.1

"The Transportation Coordinator Program has been invaluable to us," MacInnes said. "Now we have someone on board who can help coordinators from our member companies develop commuter mobility programs and enhance their current efforts with CARAVAN's services."

Those traveling to Logan International Airport have an impressive menu of options to driving alone. Combined, Massport's 1800-23-LOGAN ground transportation line, the Airport Water Shuttle, the Logan Express Bus services, and the MBTA Airport station make sitting in tunnel traffic a waste of time.

According to Sue Clippinger, Manager of Transportation Services at Logan, upcoming construction of the Third Harbor Tunnel and a parking freeze at the airport have led Massport to offer similar services for airport workers.

In the near future, Massport will have to relocate some employee parking to locations off airport property to make way for construction of the tunnel and the reconstruction of the Airport Roadway Interchange. "Having an employee transportation program will mean that we can help the people working at Logan find new alternatives to get to work," she said.

Thinking of Logan as more than a place to catch a plane means seeing it as a high-density employment site. Every day somewhere between 12,000 and 16,000 people may be on the job in the area.

"We're really unique," Clippinger said. "Essentially, Logan is open 24 hours a day. People work different shifts and flight crews may be here only every four or five days. A Transportation Coordinator will help us develop a better sense of what we can do to make Logan more accessible to them."

Survey from p.1

The 108 mile round trip from New Bedford to Boston each day costs commuters who travel on American Eagle Bus Lines \$6.50 per day. John Medeiros, President of American Eagle said, "The bus is an excellent commute option. It's economic and convenient to the MBTA making it

expenses either. Although parking is usually free and plentiful at most employment centers outside of Boston, drivers can expect to pay as much as \$5,000 annually. A vanpool will cost them less than one thousand dollars annually.



Fill'er Up - A two person carpool cuts the cost of commuting in half. Savings drop even more dramatically with more people sharing the ride.

accessible to destinations throughout the city. Our regular riders think it's the only way to go."

Similarly, the MBTA's Commuter Rail service offers a break from the high cost and frustration of driving alone. The 30-mile daily round trip from Rehoboth to North Station will cost a commuter \$60 per month with the T's rail pass. Driving that distance will cost approximately \$432. "Overall," Smilgoss said, "commuters can save a tremendous amount of money by just getting out of their cars and on to some form of shared-ride transportation."

Commuters traveling to suburban locations are not immune to large

"Suburban commuters generally travel greater distances than others and generally do not have as many transportation options as those traveling to Boston," CARAVAN Marketing Manager Kay Powers said.

"These commuters do not live and work in the same concentrated areas so demand cannot support mass transportation service," Powers said. "Vanpools and carpools afford these people the opportunity to create their own alternatives."



CARAVAN Executive Director Carolyn DeMambro, Marketing Specialist Joyce McMahon-Gulin, and North Suburban Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Robert Mercier review RideSource, CARAVAN's transportation matching service.

Classifieds

Join the RideSource Network
VANPOOL SEATS AVAILABLE

TO THE SUBURBS

ORIGIN
Cambridge
8:00
Londonderry
8:00
Needham/
Newton
8:00
Worcester
8:00

DESTINATION
Lowell
4:30
Westborough
4:30
Northborough

4:30
Cambridge
4:30

TO BOSTON

ORIGIN
Barnstable
6:50
Derry, NH
8:30
Lowell
7:40
Milford
8:00
Newburyport
8:30
Peabody
7:30
Scituate
7:45
Worcester
8:00

DESTINATION
Gov't Ctr./Kendall Sq.
3:30
Financial District
5:00
Copley Sq.
5:00
South Station
5:15
South Station
5:30
Gov't Ctr.
4:50
South Station
5:00
Downtown
5:00

All times indicate arrivals at and departures from destination locations. Call CARAVAN for Commuters at 227-POOL for additional information on Vanpools and Carpools from your area.

Join CARAVAN's RideSource Network to get in contact with transportation matching subscribers throughout the state. Thousands have registered already. Fill out the Commuter Data Card below and send it to CARAVAN and you will receive a free transportation match list providing you information on all the alternatives available for your commute.

Commuter Data Card
Please print all information.

City

State

Home

Area

Time available

Days available

Vehicle

Year

Make

Model

Work phone

Home phone

City of origin

City of destination

Office address

City

Age

Marital status

Height

Weight

Vehicle type

Vehicle year

Where to drop me off

Where to pick me up

What is my job

What is my employer

How many people in my household

How many people in my car

How many people in my household

How many people in my car

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